

LARGE DEAL IN TOBACCO

The Continental Said to Have
Secured Williams Co.

REPORT IS NOT CONFIRMED

There Seems Every Reason, However,
to Believe That It Is True—Those
in Authority Decline to
Talk.

While no direct confirmation can be obtained from those alone in a position to know the actual facts, there is every reason to believe that the Continental is endeavoring to secure the tobacco company, which was the largest independent concern of its kind in the country, has been acquired by the Continental Tobacco Company.

The head of the big concern declines to make any statement whatsoever, and this of itself is regarded as significant. The vice-president of the company, who represents a controlling interest in it, is now in New York, understood to be in conference with reference to the sale. When he returns there will probably be some information given out, but until then no expression is made. That the negotiations are on there is no doubt; that they have been closed, or practically so, is generally believed. The purchase price is said to approximate \$2,500,000.

HAS BEEN AFTER IT.

For the past year or two the Continental, a branch of the great trust which virtually controls the tobacco industry of the country, has been making its longings plain. It already controlled one big establishment here—the P. H. Mayo branch—but the size and success of the other firm made it a most desirable acquisition. It is now being acquired, but somehow things did not progress with great facility. The T. C. Williams Company set a figure, it is said, and refused to budge from it. The Continental went off for a while, and then came back, but with the same attitude.

Since this time there have been periodically circulated rumors that the company had at last sold out, but time only showed that the rumors amounted to nothing, things when they came to the surface again yesterday scant head was paid to them at first. But they were repeated and with such show of correctness that they commanded more than a passing glance. Before long the report was all around Shockoe Slip, and tobacco men were gathered about in knots discussing it.

DECLINE TO TALK.

Efforts to get a positive denial or confirmation of the report were altogether without effect. Mr. R. S. Boshier, president of the T. C. Williams Company, declined to make any statement whatsoever. He was, however, confirmed. Mr. Williams himself could not be seen. For several days past he has been in New York, and he will not be back for several days more. When he comes something definite may be given out.

While tobacco men, judging all the indications and circumstances, have come to the conclusion that the rumor is correct, a gentleman more or less closely identified with the trust, expressed the opinion